

Inside City Hall

Beyond the headlines

VOLUME 11

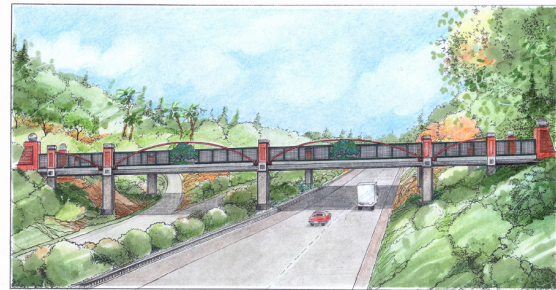
August 18, 2009

SANTA FE OVERCROSSING TO ‘CAPTURE’ TIME IN A CAPSULE: In 50

or 100 years from now, what will Visalians want to know about us and life in Visalia today? The community will have an opportunity to provide items which showcase life in Visalia in 2009. Consideration of items to seal in time capsules in two pillars on the Santa Fe Overcrossing will be done by a committee made up of City of Visalia staff, representatives of local chambers of commerce, the Tulare County Historical Society, and the media. Community members are asked to submit photos and descriptions of items they'd like the committee to consider including in the capsule by Sept. 10, via email at

nloliva@ci.visalia.ca.us. The selection of items to be placed in the time capsule will be done by committee members.

The items selected by the committee must be delivered by Sept. 30, to the third floor of the Transit Center, at 425 E. Oak Ave. A “Sealing Party” reception will be held in October, and all of the items selected for the time capsules will be on display for public viewing before they are sealed in the two towers on the Santa Fe Overcrossing. For information, contact Community Relations Manager Nancy Loliva at 713-4535.



Artist's rendition of the Santa Fe Overcrossing—set to be completed in Spring 2010.

CITY'S FINANCIAL REPORTING NETS CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR EXCELLENCE:

The City of Visalia recently received notification of being awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association for its comprehensive annual financial report. The Certificate is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting. An Award of Financial Reporting Achievement also was awarded to Tim Fosberg and Jason Montgomery, financial analysts with the City.

ASPHALT VS. PERVIOUS CONCRETE: During the Aug. 3 Council meeting, City Council members approved a notice of completion for a new parking lot at 409 E. Murray. The total bid for the project was \$81,375.44, of which \$34,300 was for the pervious concrete. The alternative, using asphalt, was \$10,699.88 less than the bid for pervious concrete. Pervious concrete helps meet growing environmental demands. By capturing rainwater and allowing it to seep into the ground, it is instrumental in recharging groundwater, reduces storm water runoff, and meets the EPA storm water regulation. The project incorporates a number of environmentally sensitive design features, such as:

- The parking lot lighting is powered by solar panels (with a battery backup). This is the City's first application of solar lighting for traffic areas, allowing staff to determine its efficiency with the goal of possibly widening the uses and applications of solar panels and solar-powered lighting.
- To reduce water consumption, landscaping has been limited to trees, with water efficient irrigation using solar-powered irrigation controls.

CITY AWARDED TWO SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL GRANTS: The City of Visalia was awarded \$319,680 for two grants which will provide sidewalk, curb, gutter and bike lanes on Linwood Street between Cherry and Walnut Avenues and lighted crosswalks near three elementary schools. "Safe Routes to Schools has been a priority of the Visalia City Council," said Visalia Mayor Jesus Gamboa. "In partnership with the Visalia Unified School District, these monies will allow us to make the streets safer for our school children." Stan Carrizosa, superintendent for the Visalia Unified School District, said, "Visalia schools and Visalia Police Department have worked hard to create safe conditions for our kids throughout the community. This grant will allow us to keep kids out of harms way while walking to and from school and serve to protect all pedestrians!" A full sidewalk, curb, gutter and bike lane will be installed along the west side of Linwood Street between Cherry and Walnut Avenues, benefiting students at Linwood Elementary, La Joya Middle School and El Diamante High School. Lighted in-pavement crosswalks will be installed at County Center Drive and Packwood Avenue which will benefit students at Cottonwood Creek Elementary, at Leila Street and Ferguson Avenue benefiting students at Manuel F. Hernandez Elementary, and at Tulare Avenue and Clover Street benefiting students attending Royal Oaks Elementary. California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) awarded \$48.5 million for 106 Safe Routes to School projects to help reduce injuries and fatalities among children in grades K-12 who walk and bicycle to school.

VISALIA'S QUALITY OF LIFE SCORES HIGH IN PUBLIC OPINION

SURVEY: Despite changes in the methodology used to conduct the Citizens Advisory Committee's annual public opinion survey, results reveal that 97 percent find believe Visalia is a good place to live. In past years, the CAC used telephone banks exclusively to conduct the survey, and the results reflected high concentrations of elderly residents which didn't coincide with Census data. A new "in-person" approach was used this year, and four different supermarket chains from different quadrants of the city were selected as locations to conduct the surveys. The responses indicated citizens' opinions on the City's quality of life, safety and services. Highlights of results:

- 97% of the respondents felt the overall quality of life in Visalia is Average to Very High, and over half of those respondents answered High to Very High;
- 89% of the 55 respondents who had contact with the Fire Department felt the quality of services were Good to Excellent;
- 49% selected road maintenance as more important over park maintenance, traffic signs and signals and recreation activities;

Council members and Suggestions for next year's survey include expanding to other supermarket outlets to broaden access to citizens; expand outreach to the Southeast Asian community; and provide the survey online on the City's website.

SPECIAL SCREENING OF "THIS IS AMERICA" SET FOR SEPT. 18: On Sept. 18th, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks will co-host a special pre-screening in Visalia of "This is America", a 45-minute film about the people whose drive and vision resulted in the formation of America's National Parks. This event celebrates the release of Ken Burns' much-touted America's Best Idea series which is set for release on Sept. 27. Parks across the country will be holding events such as these. The movie will be shown free in Visalia at the Fox Theatre on Friday, Sept. 18, at 8 p.m. Visalia Mayor Jesus Gamboa will give the welcome. The City and the National Parks have worked collaboratively on several projects, most notably the highly successful Sequoia Shuttle. Save the Date!

STATE BUDGET IMPACT ON VISALIA TOPS \$3 MILLION: The passage of the state budget came at a cost of more than \$3 million to the City of Visalia. The state borrowed \$1.9 million in property tax revenues at 8% interest, and the estimated payment from Redevelopment Agency funds is \$2.17 million. The State took a total of over \$19 million from the County and cities, and a total

of \$112.6 million from all cities in Counties in the Southern San Joaquin Valley District to help close its \$26 billion deficit.

FIREFIGHTERS TO HOST 9/11 REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY:

The Visalia Fire Department will host a September 11th Remembrance Ceremony at 9 a.m. Friday, Sept. 11, at the Visalia Fire Station No. 51, 309 S. Johnson St.

The ceremony, which is open to the public, will include an invocation, lowering of the flag to half staff and the ringing of the bell in memory of the firefighters who were lost on Sept. 11, 2001.

For more information, go to the city's website at www.ci.visalia.ca.us, and click Fire Department under Departments link.



WEST NILE VIRUS THREAT MAY BE ON THE RISE: The first positive sample of West Nile virus infected mosquitoes this year was collected on June 5th. Since then, an additional 51 samples have been confirmed positive, collected from within a broad range of collection sites throughout the city. Residents who continue to spend time outdoors at dusk and dawn anywhere within the city of Visalia, during the time these mosquitoes are most active, are likely to increase the possibility of being bitten by a WNV infected mosquito. West Nile virus is spread by infected mosquitoes, and can cause serious, life-altering and even fatal disease. The elderly and those with compromised immune systems are most susceptible to illness and death caused by WNV.

The Delta Vector Control District will continue to intensify its efforts to identify non-maintained swimming pools, a significant breeding place for mosquitoes, and other areas of mosquito breeding. Additional mosquito surveillance, source identification activities, and/ or fogging operations are possible.

Residents are urged to take the following precautions:

- Use an effective mosquito repellent such as DEET and follow label instructions;
- Dress in long sleeves and pants during dawn and dusk or in areas where mosquitoes are active;
- Drain standing water that may produce mosquitoes, and;
- Repair or replace door or window screens that have tears or holes to prevent mosquitoes from entering.

To learn if the District is spraying for adult mosquitoes in your area, please visit the District's Web site at www.deltavcd.com.

Inside City Hall is a publication of the City of Visalia.

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